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# Distributive Justice and Punishment in Team Sports

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DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE AND PUNISHMENT IN TEAM SPORTS

A Thesis  
Presented to  
The Faculty of the Department of Psychology  
Western Kentucky University  
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

By  
David Ross Bucur

May 2002



DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE AND PUNISHMENT IN TEAM SPORTS

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## DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE AND PUNISHMENT IN TEAM SPORTS

David R. Bucur

May 1, 2002

69 Pages

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Distributive justice outcomes of punishment in an intercollegiate team sport setting were investigated. Male intercollegiate athletes ( $N=148$ ) participating in the NAIA National Soccer Championship Tournament responded to one of eight scenarios and reported perceived fairness to player, fairness to teammates, deterrence to future player misconduct, and deterrence to future teammate misconduct. The results indicated that athletes perceive consistent distribution of punishment as more fair than conditional distribution of punishment; consistently distributed punishment is perceived to be more likely to deter future misconduct than conditional punishment; punishment, in general, is perceived as more fair when the violation committed is severe as opposed to moderately severe; severe punishment is perceived to deter future misconduct more often than moderately severe punishment when the violation is severe; and severe and moderate punishment are equally likely to deter future misconduct when the violation is moderately severe.

## Distributive Justice and Punishment in Team Sports

An organization is typically characterized by a hierarchical arrangement of its members, which allows for delegation of authority and responsibility. This organizational structure bestows certain organizational members more power than others. This imbalance of power allows for unjust and unfair procedures to exist in an organization. Justice or lack of justice has spurred philosophical, scientific, and religious debate dating back to Plato and Socrates (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). The focus of recent study is concerned with justice or fairness in business organizations.

The role of fairness as it applies to the workplace is known as Organizational Justice (Moorman, 1991). There are three different components of organizational justice: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice. Distributive justice refers to perceptions of the fairness of outcome allocations received by the employee. Procedural justice is a term used to describe perceptions of the fairness of decision processes used to determine outcome allocations. Finally, interactional justice pertains to the perceptions of interpersonal treatment during the justice process (Bies & Moag, 1986). All three types of justice are dependent upon the employee's perceptions in the workplace.

The current study will extend the previous organizational justice research from the business setting to the athletic team setting. Organizational justice applies to team sport organizations in much the same way it does to the business organization. The principles of organizational justice are not limited to business organizations, but likely apply to all other organizations as well. A sports team mirrors a business organization but replaces bosses with coaches and employees with players. As in a business

organization, some teammates have more responsibility than others but ultimately the boss or coach is responsible for the group performance.

The present study will focus on distributive justice outcomes of punishment in team settings. Punishment is a common practice in organizational settings to reduce or eliminate undesirable behavior (Arvey & Ivancevich, 1980). This study will assess the effects of punishment severity on the reprimanded team member as well as the effect it has on non-punished teammates. Two levels of severity will be investigated: severe and moderate. Distributive justice principles will be operationalized as either consistent or conditional punishment. Four dependent variables will be studied: fairness of punishment to the athlete who violated a rule, fairness of the punishment to teammates, and the likelihood the punishment will deter the same or similar acts in the future by the punished athlete or teammates.

The existing literature on organizational justice will be reviewed to illustrate the basic principles underlying justice perceptions. Brief discussions of procedural and interactional justice will follow. Equity theory, a precursor of distributive justice, will then be considered. Finally, distributive justice will be explained followed by literature on punishment in organizational settings.

### *Organizational Justice*

Organizational justice is concerned with an employee's perception of fairness in the workplace. In an organization, "fairness is a unifying value providing fundamental principles that can bind together conflicting parties and create stable social structures" (Konovsky, 2000, p. 490). An employee can gauge fair treatment in an organization in a number of ways that fall under the parameters of organizational justice. The following

example will provide the reader with three explicit means by which fairness is perceived. Suppose the manager of a firm is considering an employee for promotion. In order to arrive at a decision the manager may entertain input from other employees as well as the employee being considered, or the manager could make the decision entirely on his/her own. These two methods describe procedures that may be used to reach a decision about the promotion. Whichever procedural route the manager decides to take will have an effect on employee's perceptions of fairness. The manager will make a decision about the promotion and the employee will perceive the outcome of the decision as fair or unfair. During this process, the manager's interaction with the employee also has an effect on justice perception.

The three types of organizational justice illustrated above are: process or procedural justice, outcome or distributive justice, and interpersonal or interactional justice. Each type is distinct, but they may have overlapping effects; that is, even though an employee may not perceive an outcome favorably, he/she may perceive the process by which that outcome was determined to be fair. Thus, the unfavorable attitude resulting from the outcome may be neutralized.

The importance of organizational justice effects should not be ignored because of the impact they have on employees. Distributive, procedural, and interactional justice perceptions influence subsequent performance in the workplace (Williams, 1999). In a day and age where productivity and profit represent the bottom line, organizational justice resounds.



### *Procedural Justice*

Folger and Greenberg (1985) defined procedural justice as the perceived fairness of the processes used in making decisions -- that is, the means used to attain an end. Cropanzano and Schminke (2001) implied that outcomes do not merely materialize but rather are the result of a series of events. It is this series of events that the disputant deems just or unjust. Individuals want to be a part of the decision making process regardless of the outcome. Thibaut and Walker's (1975) research suggested that disputants were willing to give up control in the decision stage to retain control in the process stage.

According to Folger and Greenberg (1985), legal scholars have long been interested in maintaining fair judicial procedures to ensure society of the legitimacy of the legal system. The earliest spotlight on procedural justice in organizations was provided by Thibaut and Walker in 1975 (as cited in Pinder, 1998). They focused on the procedures implemented to resolve disputes in the workplace by investigating two types of control: the amount of control over processes used to settle disputes (process control) and the amount of control over allocating the outcome (decision control). This framework is known as the dispute-resolution process, where evidence is presented in the process stage then evaluated in the decision stage. In analogous terms utilized by Sheppard (1984, as cited in Folger and Greenberg, 1985), a basketball referee, who may affect the tone of the game but not the outcome, has process control; a boxing judge, whose assessment of performance affects the outcome but does not influence the process of the bout itself, has decision control.

A typology of the dispute-resolution procedure follows from combining the alternative forms of process control and decision control. These procedures are: (a) *autocratic procedures*- where the third party has control over processes and decisions; (b) *arbitration procedures*- where the third party has control over decisions, but not processes; (c) *mediation procedures*- where the third party has control over processes, but not decisions; (d) *moot procedures*- where the third party shares control over processes and decisions with disputants; and (e) *bargaining procedures*- where the third party has no control over processes and decisions. Thibaut and Walker (1975) advocate that the fairest decisions result when decision control is entrusted in a third party, but process control is entrusted in the disputants themselves.

The dispute-resolution process is used to explain procedural justice effects based on the instrumental model (Konovsky, 2000). The instrumental model subscribes to the premise that people wish to maximize their outcomes, and are willing to do so over time. It assumes people will accept a long-term approach to maximization, as long as they believe they will ultimately benefit from the procedures. If procedures that guide the allocations are perceived as fair, people believe they will eventually earn what they deserve. In other words, procedural justice may help to build trust within the organization. Trust shared between employee and manager may aid in offsetting the negative impact of distributive decisions (Pinder, 1998).

In an organization there are allocations that may be manipulated in the employee's favor as well as those that may not be manipulated in the employee's favor. However, there may be ways to conciliate negative employee outcomes through procedural perceptions of justice. Folger and Greenberg (1985) stated that "the perceived fairness of

organizational outcomes is likely to be based, at least in part, on the processes through which they are determined" (p. 142). Thibaut and Walker (1975) explained that the dispersion of control among disputants and a third-party decision maker is the paramount procedural component shaping individuals' perceptions about the fairness of procedures.

In contrast to Thibaut and Walker's (1975) process-oriented approach, Leventhal's (1980) structural approach describes six criteria that a procedure should meet in order to be perceived as fair. Procedures should: (a) be consistently applied across people and time, (b) be free from self-interest, (c) ensure that accurate information is collected and used in making decisions, (d) provide opportunity to correct flawed or inaccurate decisions, (e) observe personal or prevailing standards of ethics or morality, and (f) ensure that the opinions of those affected by the decision have been taken into account. Despite these differences in conceptualization, both camps share a common belief regarding process control as a primary aspect of procedural justice.

One of the longest standing justice debates concerns the independence of procedural and distributive justice, as well as their distinctive importance. Leventhal (1976) argued that procedural justice is a necessary forerunner in promoting distributive fairness. He continues to say that without the existence of procedural fairness, distributive fairness would cease to exist. Thibaut and Walker (1975) supported the idea that distributive fairness is capable of existing without any special procedures leading to its culmination. More recently, both frameworks of justice have been independently recognized as important determinants of employee perceptions of fairness (Williams, 1999). Cropanzano and Ambrose (2001) believed that the procedural/distributive justice

distinction may be overemphasized, but very necessary in allowing organizational justice research to advance.

In all, it is apparent that procedural justice is a critical determinant of fairness perceptions in the workplace. Applications of procedural justice include reward allocation, performance evaluation procedures, personnel selection, compensation systems, discipline procedures, and participatory decision-making systems (Pinder, 1998). The next section will focus on interactional justice and its place in organizations.

### *Interactional Justice*

Interactional justice considers the quality of person to person interaction throughout the course of organizational procedure. Bies and Moag (1986) initially declared interactional justice as a third type of justice, aside from procedural justice. Since then, there has been some debate over whether it is actually an independent entity. However, Colquitt et al. (2001) completed a meta-analytic review of organizational justice and concluded that procedural and interactional justice have different correlates. They broke interactional justice into two distinct categories allowing for further differences among the dimensions to be examined. The first category, designated interpersonal justice, reflects "the degree to which people are treated with politeness, dignity and respect by authorities or third parties involved in executing procedures or determining outcomes"(p.427). The second category, designated informational justice, conveys information about the procedures that were carried out and the outcomes that were reached.

Interactional justice influences perceptions of fairness by providing the disputant with understanding and reason. Explanation of how processes and procedures are

handled is important to an employee. Williams (1999) explained that giving both information justifying received outcomes as well as a voice in the decision process result in employee perceptions of fairness. He conducted a study of justice effects on performance and found an increase in task performance when an explanation as to why specific outcomes were received was provided.

Colquitt et al. (2001) claimed that interpersonal justice works to counter reactions to received outcomes by alleviating disapproval resulting from an unfavorable outcome. Supervisor sensitivity merely makes people feel better about a negative outcome. Informational justice acts much the same way by preventing negative reactions to outcomes through an explanation of structural aspects of the process. Interactional justice is an essential part of organizational justice. When interactional components are favorably implemented, they may counter potential negative perceptions resulting from poor execution of procedural or distributive justice.

The earlier example of the "employee up for promotion" will be used to help illustrate the importance of interactional justice. Suppose that management shared very little communication with the employee during the entire decision process. One day they simply placed a note in the employee's mailbox informing him that he was not going to be promoted. The employee will likely experience feelings of disgust and betrayal. With no buffer to control his negative emotion, the employee develops a pessimistic outlook toward the organization.

Now, consider management arrived at the same conclusion after careful deliberation. However, during the entire decision process the employee was kept abreast on the advancement of his position. Management was cordial but truthful with the

employee, ensuring him that the procedures implemented were fair. When management decided against promoting the employee they sat down with him and explained their decision. They showed interest in his concerns and were sensitive to his needs as an employee, yet they stood behind the processes and procedures that were implemented. Greenberg (1988) discovered that supervisors were more likely to be judged as fair if they actively communicated fairness through interaction rather than merely distributive justice alone. Thus, the employee's negative reaction that was evident in the previous passage has been avoided due to the interpersonal treatment between him and the decision-makers. There is no doubt the employee is disappointed, but the interactional justice implemented provides a buffer to soothe any negative emotions felt by the employee.

Interactional justice shed light on the importance of interpersonal treatment of employees in the workplace. The interpersonal treatment that a person receives affects his/her perception of fairness when procedures are implemented and decisions are made. The next section will discuss equity theory and its underlying influence on distributive justice assumptions of fairness.

### *Equity Theory*

Equity theory, first proposed by Adams in 1963, states that "outcomes will be perceived as fair when the ratio of outcomes to inputs is equal across individuals" (Harder, 1991). *Inputs* refer to characteristics such as, skills, education, effort, ingenuity, etc.; *outcomes* refer to pay, promotion, status, satisfaction, etc. In most situations, individuals expect to receive outcomes proportional to their inputs. Equity theory applies this principle to the work place.

Three primary concerns determine perceptions of equitable treatment in an organization (Carrell & Dittrich, 1978). First, employees seek fair or just returns for what they contribute to their jobs. Compensation should be proportional to the contributions or inputs by the employee. Compensation or outcome may include anything positive the individual receives in return for his/her inputs. Monetary reward, promotion, heightened self-efficacy, and gratification are examples of outcomes. Inputs are anything an individual feels he/she brings to the table in contributing to the organization. Education, experience-level, personality, and enthusiasm are examples of inputs.

A second factor of perceived equitable treatment is social comparison. Social comparison theory predicts that people will contrast their own inputs and outcomes with those perceived to be similar to themselves (Pinder, 1998). Employees compare their own relative inputs and outcomes with those of fellow workers. Inputs and outcomes are evaluated in ratio terms, known as equity ratios. Individuals can tolerate other employees receiving greater outcomes than themselves if they perceive those employees to have contributed more than themselves. For example, suppose employee S is occasionally absent and frequently turns in assignments late, while employee C rarely misses a day of work and always completes assignments on time. Employee S can tolerate employee C's higher pay rate because of his increased dedication to the organization. Employee C's input is greater than employee S's; therefore his outcome is greater as well, balancing the input-outcome ratio.

Inequity is created when the input-outcome ratio of an employee is inconsistent with that of a comparable referent. For instance, suppose employee S and employee C

have comparable work ethic, education, and skill warranting equal input ratios. Yet, employee S resides in a sunlit office four times the size of employee C's halogen infested cubicle in the basement. The equity ratios between employees are unequal, creating inequity.

A third component of perceived equitable treatment assumes that employees will seek to reduce inequity when they perceive themselves to be in an inequitable situation. Harder (1991) stated that inequity between comparable referents causes tension. This tension, caused by the perception of inequity, will motivate employees to reduce inequity. Consequently, they explore ways by which they can reduce the tension caused by inequitable treatment. According to equity theory, inequity must be reduced for tension to be reduced. The cognitive processes in equity theory are based largely on those in Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance. He proposed that psychological tension is produced by incongruent cognitions within the individual. The individual will then act to reduce the unpleasant tension.

There are several ways that equity can be restored. (a) *Changing effort to restore equity*- the effort level of an individual may change, dependent upon the type of inequity they are experiencing. If employees feel underpaid they may reduce the quantity or quality of their performance; if employees feel overpaid they may increase the quantity or quality of their performance. Inequity results in changing effort to be consistent with the employee's compensation. (b) *Cognitive reevaluations of outcomes*- perceptions may be altered when reality cannot be changed. For example, an individual may learn that productivity rates of a better compensated employee exceeds that of his/her own. Therefore, the individual may choose to reevaluate inputs or outcomes. In some



instances an individual may target a different referent with which to compare his input-outcome ratio. (c) *Dysfunctional reactions to perceived equity*- Greenberg (1990; 1993) suggested employee theft as a possible reaction to inequitable treatment. In the battle to equate the input-outcome ratio, theft serves to increase an employee's outcome. As an employee's outcome increases by stealing money, ideas, property, etc., and the input remains the same, balance is restored to their perceived input-outcome ratio. (d) *Silence*- In much the same way that the unfairly treated child responds to the parent with silence, the unfairly treated employee may respond with silence to management. The employee remains part of the organization but withdraws, in effect reducing his/her inputs.

Equity theory provided the foundation for distributive justice, which will be discussed next.

#### *Distributive Justice*

Distributive justice concerns perceptions of fairness of resource allocation among those in the organization. Munchinsky (1997) identified three rules of distribution that form the basis of distributive justice: equity, equality, and need. As previously discussed, *equity* suggests that outcomes will be perceived as fair when the ratio of outcomes to inputs is consistent across individuals. Consider an organization that is determining salary increases for its employees. Equity distribution would suggest the employee with higher inputs would receive a large salary increase. The *equality* rule of distribution states that everybody should be given the same rewards regardless of their contribution to the organization. In this case, every employee would receive the same salary outcome regardless of their input. Finally, the *need* rule of distribution suggests that dividends should be allocated on the basis of need. In the previous example, an employee would be

given a large raise on the basis of his nine children and two mortgages, which represent a greater need for income over other employees.

Which rule is the fairest? The answer is challenging because people tend to evaluate these three rules of distribution according to their own value system (Muchinsky, 1997). This idea presents an extremely difficult task for an organization attempting to appease everyone according to his or her own personal scales of fairness. However, Moorman (1991) suggested employees who maintain beliefs of fair treatment will most likely maintain positive attitudes toward their supervisors, their work, and their outcomes.

Leventhal (1980) argued that judgements based on distributive justice have greater impact in determining overall fairness judgements than those based on procedural justice. In a study contrasting distributive and procedural justice as predictors of satisfaction, McFarlin and Sweeney (1992) found distributive justice was a better predictor of job satisfaction than procedural justice. It is important to note that procedural justice is an integral component of organizational justice and a large number of studies (Folger & Greenberg, 1985; Pinder, 1998) have indicated procedural justice as the primary determinant of overall fairness perceptions.

Thus far the literature review has focused on the fair treatment of individuals through process, distribution, and interaction. To this point it may be assumed that organizational justice refers only to positive or beneficial outcomes. In fact, organizational outcomes include reprimands as well as rewards. The next section will discuss relevant literature concerning punishment and its relationship to distributive justice.

## *Punishment*

The word punishment may illicit disturbing stereotypes concerning the nature of discipline (note: the term discipline will be used synonymously with punishment). However, punishment in its many forms provides individuals with consequential information concerning what is right and what is wrong. The use of punishment or threat of punishment in organizational settings is relatively common (Arvey & Ivancevich, 1980). Punishment is a necessary part of existence, allowing individuals to learn from their mistakes.

Punishment "is the presentation of an aversive event or the removal of a positive event following a response which decreases the frequency of that response" (Kazadin, 1975, p. 33). It is important to note the underlying contingency or relationship between a response and an aversive consequence. Punishment is not a random aversive consequence but is the result of a specific action. It is this contingency that allows punishment to sway from chance to reason; the contingency explains the reason punishment was elicited.

According to Arvey and Ivancevich (1980), punishment can occur in two ways. The first form of punishment involves the presentation of an aversive event following a response. There are two categories, primary and secondary, that relate to the types of aversive stimuli. A *primary* aversive event is characterized by stimuli that are inherently aversive such as electric shock or loud noise. *Conditioned* or *secondary* aversive events are characterized by stimuli that become unpleasant through repeated pairings with an already aversive event. Within an organization, the majority of aversive treatment is consistent with the second category (Arvey & Ivancevich, 1980). Reprimands, nods, and

gestures are common examples of conditioned aversive events. Another example of an aversive event following a behavior is response cost (e.g., paying a fine). These events may serve two purposes; they may either punish or decrease some behavior or they may foreshadow an impending aversive consequence coupled with some behavior.

### *Disadvantages of Punishment*

Historically, the distribution of punishment has not been without its share of controversy. Arvey and Ivancevich (1980) reported that in 1938 Skinner initially condemned the use of punishment, saying it was ineffective or only temporary. He further concluded that punishment manifested undesirable side effects for those involved. Because of Skinner's high status, punishment remained black-flagged for many years until the 1960s when researchers began to advocate the effects of punishment on suppressing and or eliminating behavior. However, the increased attention to punishment included adversaries as well as advocates.

There are a number of reasons some argue punishment should be avoided. One reason posits the undesirable emotional and behavioral consequences for both parties in the punishment process. An employee may cast revenge on the punisher in order to even the score (Ball & Sims, 1991). Aggressive acts or feelings toward the punisher may result in sabotage or humiliation. The punished may also escape or avoid the situation through turnover or absenteeism (Arvey & Ivancevich, 1980). In addition, feelings of anxiety towards future punishment may hinder the performance of the punished individual (Ball & Sims, 1991). The negative emotions of sadness and anger may also result from punishment. Ball and Sims claimed that these undesirable side effects are less likely to occur in situations where punishment is systematically administered. In

fact, Johnston (1972) reported that very few studies have demonstrated these undesirable emotional side effects. His review concluded that the primary result of punishment was improvement of behavior

A second factor impeding the use of punishment is the view that punishment is inhumane or unethical (Arvey & Ivancevich, 1980). Some people view punishment as retributive justice, the old "eye for an eye" standpoint. This perspective credits punishment with achieving justice rather than modifying behavior. The approach often regards punishment as "past oriented," insisting that the reason for punishment is to rectify some past situation. Proponents of punishment would regard punishment as "future oriented," insisting punishment is used as a tool to correct future behavior.

The third reason punishment may be discredited is the belief that it never really eliminates or extinguishes undesirable behavior; it merely suppresses behavior until the threat of punishment is removed (Arvey & Ivancevich, 1980); that is, the punished behavior may eventually reappear when punishment stops or when the punisher is not present (Ormrod, 1999). This perspective is directly related to the fourth reason admonishing punishment, that continued monitoring is necessary for punishment to be effective. In progressive organizations, continued monitoring is virtually impossible due to the lack of available time and personnel.

The current use of punishment in organizations, despite its potential disadvantages, affirms the beneficial contribution it can render. There are specific variables that influence the effectiveness of punishment in organizational settings. These variables will be discussed in the following sections.

### *Effectiveness of Punishment*

Bandura stated that in our daily lives punishment is a natural occurrence that shapes a large part of our behavior (Ormrod, 1999). For instance, learning not to touch a hot stove by placing a finger on the range is a naturally occurring punishment. It would be hard to deny the importance of this punishment, for without it the behavior would continue, culminating in the possible loss of a valuable appendage. This form of punishment is easy to comprehend and extremely effective. However, in organizational settings there are a number of variables that contribute to the effectiveness of punishment.

Arvey and Ivancevich (1980) described six variables that influence the effectiveness of punishment in organizational settings. They are as follows: (a) *Timing of Punishment*- There are different periods throughout the application of punishment that an aversive stimulus can be presented; during the emission of the punished response, immediately following the punished response, or sometime after the punished response. Arvey and Ivancevich concluded that punishment is most effective when administered immediately following the undesirable response. (b) *Intensity*- Punishment may be administered at differing levels of intensity ranging from relatively low intensity (e.g., head nod) to extremely high intensity (e.g., electric shock). Parke and Walters (as cited in Arvey & Ivancevich, 1980) claimed punishment is not effective if too short or too mild because the aversive stimulus is too easily adaptable. At the same time, Parke (as cited in Arvey & Ivancevich, 1980) insisted that overly severe punishment may result in heightened levels of anxiety and prevent adaptive learning (e.g., the ability to discriminate between correct and incorrect responses) to occur. Hamner and Organ (1972) claimed that in many organizations punishment is initially administered at low

levels, increasing as the undesirable behavior persists. They assert that this approach is much less effective than initiating moderately severe punishment in early instances of the undesirable behavior. Arvey and Ivancevich (1980) proposed that moderate levels of punishment intensity are more effective than high or low levels. (c) *Relationships with Punishing Agent*- The relationship shared between employee and manager may depict the impact of punishment, in that a relatively close and friendly relationship may render the most effective punishment. (d) *Schedule of Punishment*- Punishment can be delivered on a continuous schedule, variable or fixed interval schedule, or a variable or fixed ratio schedule. Some managers may punish an employee after every undesirable response, only after behavior persists for a variable or fixed period of time, or after a variable or fixed number of undesirable responses have occurred. Laboratory research suggests that punishment is most effective when administered on a continuous basis (Arvey & Ivancevich, 1980). In an organizational setting, Gary (1971) discovered less absenteeism from employees who were continuously punished for absenteeism compared to those who were inconsistently or never punished. (d) *Provision of Rationale*- It is important to keep the lines of communication open between management and employee during the punishment process. A clear explanation of the implications of the punished behavior is thought to increase the efficacy of punishment. (f) *Alternative Responses Available*- Employees must be made aware of responses that elicit reward and praise. When alternative responses are reinforced and undesirable responses are punished, an employee can be certain of what is expected.

These variables, if properly implemented, increase punishment's ability to modify behavior. The next section discusses how punishment fits into the organizational justice

paradigm. The review will focus on the distribution of punishment and its effects on the individual.

*Punishment, Justice, and the Individual*

Interestingly, Ball, Trevino, and Sims (1993) pointed out that the undesirable side effects claimed to imperil punishment are strikingly similar to those associated with injustice. In fact, they explained that Mikula (1986) discovered such emotional responses as anger, rage, and indignation in subjects that had been treated unjustly. Current literature suggests the just distribution of punishment may underlie employee emotion rather than punishment alone. Ball and Sims (1991) stated that punishment, when used in the proper context and manner, can enhance employee satisfaction.

Ball, Trevino, and Sims (1992) proposed an employee's evaluation of a punishment incident as just or unjust can elicit positive or negative reactions. The perceived fairness of employee punishment depends on a number of components that shape employee attitudes. Initially, disciplined subordinates evaluate the justice of punishment outcomes based on punishment intensity in relation to (a) comparable referent punishment and (b) the undesirable act itself (Ball et al., 1993). Distributive injustice is likely to persist when punishment comparisons of similar employee infractions are not consistent (Ball et al., 1992). Subordinates may deem the punishment too intense compared to that received by similar others or too intense given the misconduct. Therefore, it is important for outcome distributions to maintain a sense of equity between employees.

The intensity of the disciplinary action can have powerful effects on the employee as well. Greer and Labig (1987) studied employee reactions to disciplinary action and



found that greater intensity is associated with greater reduction of misconduct. However, they also found that as the intensity of the punishment increased, employee perception of inappropriate supervisory behavior increased, leading to a breakdown in the supervisor/employee relationship. Ball and Trevino (1992) found that supervisors experienced more undesirable emotions when punishing employees with whom an unsatisfactory relationship had existed, reducing the amount of perceived fairness experienced by a punished employee. Thus, the relationship between the supervisor and employee is a contributing factor in determining perceptions of justice.

Another factor that influences the perception of the fairness of punishment is an understanding of the outcome itself. Sims and Gioia (1986) suggested that the perception of punishment outcomes may depend on employee comprehension of the disciplinary event. Punished employees want to know why they have been disciplined in order to assess whether they have or have not been treated justly (Bies, 1987).

Personality is also an influential component in assessing the effects punishment will have on an employee. Personality traits are relatively stable over time and can explain individual differences in cognition and behavior. Two personality traits have been prominently discussed in punishment literature: belief in a just world and negative affectivity (Ball, Trevino, & Sims, 1993). *Belief in a just world*- Belief in a just world refers to a general notion that people get what they deserve. Good people get rewarded and bad people get punished. It is a belief that stems from childhood and matures as the individual develops. According to Ball et al. (1994), people with a strong belief in a just world have preconceived notions of deserved punishment in certain situations.

Therefore, punishment is considered just when an individual engages in activity that is

contrary to organizational norms, rules, and policies. On the other hand, those with an unsubstantiated belief in a just world are more likely to reject punishment, attributing fault to others or fate. *Negative Affectivity*- refers to an ongoing negative self-concept that effects the interpretation of information (Ball et al., 1994). Individuals with high negative affectivity concentrate on the negative characteristics of themselves, their jobs, and the world in general. Therefore, in contrast to those with low affectivity, high affectivity individuals tend to view punishment as less constructive, less equitable, and harsher. Ball et al., (1994) stated that there is an inverse relationship between negative affectivity and distributive justice, satisfaction with supervisor, and organizational commitment.

A final topic addresses inconsistent punishment between individuals of differing status levels committing similar misconduct. Rosen and Jerdee (1974) studied factors influencing disciplinary judgments and found that an employee's value to an organization may significantly influence disciplinary recommendations. In one instance, a similar rule infraction was committed by both a janitor and a vice-president. Subsequently, the janitor was punished more severely. Rosen and Jerdee suggested that misconduct committed by high status or creative talent employees was perceived as less serious and unethical than misconduct committed by less valued employees. Ball et al.(1994) found that for performance to improve as the result of punishment, subordinates must perceive the punishment as matching the infraction and as consistent with what others in the organization committing similar infractions have received.

### *Effects of Punishment on Observers*

The established perspective of punishment is typically thought of as affecting a single employee, that is the punished individual. However, to fully understand the impact of punishment, one must encompass the entire social context in which it occurs. When punishment is viewed as a social event, its influence extends beyond the punished subordinate to other employees who observe the event. An observer refers to anyone in the relevant social context that takes an interest in the co-worker's punishment (Trevino, 1992). Therefore, the establishment of punishment may permeate an entire organization without directly effecting every individual.

Social learning theory, which emphasizes learning through observation and modeling, is a key consideration in organizational punishment (Arvey & Jones, 1985). One component of observational learning is vicarious punishment. According to Bandura, vicarious punishment takes place when the disciplinary consequences of a particular response are observed (Ormrod, 1999). As a result, the observer vicariously learns that a certain behavior is not tolerated.

Similarly, deterrence theory suggests that the properties of a punishment event influence deterrence effectiveness. If an individual expects that a certain behavior will be punished and the severity of the subsequent punishment will outweigh the potential reward of the misconduct, that person will be less likely to engage in that behavior (Trevino, 1992). Organizational literature suggests, when punishment severity is related to the formation of punishment expectancy, only severe punishment of misconduct influences observers punishment expectancies (Trevino, 1992). Therefore, severe punishment may be necessary to get the attention of observers.

According to distributive justice principles, evaluations of the fairness of punishment outcomes are a function of severity appropriateness and consistency. *Severity appropriateness* refers to how observers evaluate punishment severity in relation to a given misconduct. According to researchers in both criminal justice and organizational areas, observers prefer punishment that is substantially more severe than that commonly distributed (Trevino, 1992). This severity preference may stem from the concept of retributive justice, which states that people expect violators of rules and norms to be punished in order to uphold standards of behavior. When observers identify with misconduct, they expect behavior to be punished in a manner that resolves disharmony, protecting the group and its values. Farwell and Weiner (1996) studied self-perceptions in individual and group contexts and discovered the belief that persons perceived to be responsible for events should receive extreme rewards and punishments. This belief may account for an observer's perception of the justice of severe punishment. *Consistency* remains a key determinant in the evaluation of observer's perception of the justice of punishment distribution. In accordance with equity theory, observers expect punishment outcomes to be consistent across employees. Punishment is perceived to be just if outcomes are not harsher or more lenient than a comparable referent has received (Trevino, 1992).

Trevino's framework provided implications for further theory, research, and practice. First, she encouraged a theoretical shift away from the behaviorist perspective of punishment toward a perspective that regards punishment as a social phenomenon that influences the observer's cognitions and actions. Punishment research focused too narrowly on individual contingencies, ignoring the effects on the remainder of the group.

Second, organizational literature continues to highlight the negative outcomes of punishment on the individual. However, shifting the focus onto the social context enables the event of punishment to be viewed as positive or negative by observers, depending on their understanding of the event. Third, future research should investigate the potential role of justice evaluations in response to less explicit manager-imposed or work-imposed punishment (Trevino, 1992).

In sum, punishment is an inescapable phenomenon that saturates the entire social milieu in which it pervades. The effects of punishment on the individual and the observer may be mediated by the evaluation of its fairness. The justice perspective suggests that subordinates react more positively to punishment that is perceived to be fair than to punishment perceived to be unfair (Ball, Trevino, & Sims, 1994). The severity and consistency of punishment determines how punishment is evaluated, either just or unjust. The perceived harshness of punishment is a distributive characteristic that combines concerns about consistency and severity appropriateness (Ball et al., 1994). Ball et al. (1994) research suggests that an employee's interpretation of the distributive aspect of a punishment event (harshness) is essential for punishment effectiveness. Therefore, unless the two issues of severity and consistency are examined, we cannot begin to understand the resonating effects of punishment in organizations.

#### *Summary of Literature*

Organizational literature attempts to describe and explain the role of fairness in the workplace. It alleges that the perception of just treatment among employees will lead to satisfactory feelings regarding the workplace, workplace supervisors, and workplace outcomes. Distributive, procedural, and interactional justice all play integral roles in

determining justice perceptions within an organization. Equity theory asserts that people compare their own ratios of inputs and outcomes to those of comparable others.

Considering this theory, it is of the utmost importance that the allocation of outcomes among group members (distributive justice) is represented by equitable distribution.

Outcomes include rewards as well as reprimands. Punishment is an outcome provided to alleviate undesirable behavior and to protect the social norms of an organization. It is apparent that punishment effects not only the punished but the observers of the punishment as well. Both forms of outcome, reward and punishment, stand to reinforce proper or expected behavior while reducing inappropriate behavior within the organization.

#### *Present Study*

The present study is concerned with the fair distribution of punishment outcomes among sports team members. The organization of many sports teams closely replicates the hierarchical make-up of a business organization. As such, target perceptions of fairness concerning both a punished individual and the observing team members can be assessed. This study attempts to determine if principles derived from business organizations will generalize to sports teams. Specifically, this study investigates the effect of two levels of severity of misconduct (severe and moderate), two levels of severity of punishment (severe and moderate), and the equity of the distribution of the punishment (consistent/equitable or conditional/inequitable) in a sports team setting. Consistent punishment indicates that each team member is treated similarly and receives equitable punishment for comparable offenses. Conditional punishment indicates dissimilar treatment of the teams star member or most valuable player. The dependent

variables include punished team member and observant team member's perceptions of fairness, as well as the deterrence of future misconduct due to the punishment. It was hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: Consistent punishment across all team members, including the star member, will be perceived as more fair than will conditional punishment.

Hypothesis 1a: Consistent punishment will be perceived more fair than conditional punishment to the punished team member.

Hypothesis 1b: Consistent punishment will be perceived more fair than conditional punishment to the other members of the team. This hypothesis is based on equity theory and individual's comparisons of their outcomes to referent others.

Hypothesis 2: More severe punishment will act as a greater deterrent to future offenses of all team members.

Hypothesis 2a: Severe punishment will be perceived as a greater deterrent than moderate punishment to future offenses by the punished teammate.

Hypothesis 2b: Severe punishment will be perceived as a greater deterrent than moderate punishment to future offenses by the other members of the team. This coincides with the research on the severity and intensity of the punishment and its effects on those within the social context of the organization.

## Method

### *Scenario Development*

Eight hypothetical scenarios were created representing moderate and severe sport team infractions and punishments. Two levels of the distributive justice variable, two levels of the punishment variable, and two levels of the offense variable were combined to develop the scenarios. The two levels of the distributive justice variables were consistent and conditional punishment. The two levels for the punishment were moderate and severe; the two levels of the offense were moderate and severe. The scenarios may be found in Appendix A.

### *Stimulus-Rating Study*

A stimulus-rating study (Specht, 2000) obtained severity ratings of possible team offenses and punishments to be used in developing scenarios. Initial lists of violations and punishments were generated. Two intercollegiate basketball coaches from two different universities refined this list, yielding 17 infractions and 11 punishments. A questionnaire was distributed to 28 intercollegiate athletes and 8 coaches at two universities as well as to 39 undergraduate students from a third university. The questionnaire consisted of the 17 infractions and the 11 punishments. These were rated on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1= not severe to 5= extremely severe. The mean ratings and standard deviations for the infractions and punishments may be found in Appendix B. The participants of the stimulus-rating study were 15 males (20%) and 60 females (80%) ranging in age from 18 to 43 years with a mean age of 20.2 years ( $SD = 3.96$ ). Of these participants, 22.7% reported they were African American, 72% White, 1.3% Hispanic, and 2.7% reported other. Demographically, participants indicated a



variety of athletic experience (6 Recreation League, 2 Intramural, 21 High School Varsity, 28 NCAA Intercollegiate), which included play in basketball, tennis, track, soccer, and cheerleading.

The findings of the stimulus-rating study suggested the selection of moderate and severe violation and punishment scenarios. The severe punishment selected, dismissal from the team, was clearly rated the most severe by all three subject pools. The moderate punishment selected, suspension from practice, was judged to be closest to midrange and was the median for this variable. There were clearly two most severe offenses, failing a drug test and committing a felony, sharing similar means across all three subject pools. Failing the drug test was selected for use in the scenarios. The moderate offense selected, unsportsmanlike conduct, was judged to be closest to midrange and was the median for this variable.

### *Instrument*

Distributive justice and the effects of punishment were measured using a questionnaire consisting of one of eight hypothetical scenarios and seven items. The first three items served as a manipulator check to ensure participants correctly understood which rule was violated, which punishment was implemented, and whether or not the punishment was consistent with team rules. The remaining four items addressed the following: whether or not the actual punishment was fair to the individual who violated the rule, whether or not the actual punishment was fair to other team members, whether or not the punishment implemented will deter the individual who violated the rule from violating this or similar rules in the future, and whether or not the punishment implemented will deter other team members from violating the same or similar rules in

the future. The participants were asked to read and respond to the hypothetical scenarios as if they were a member of the team in question. The instrument may be found in Appendix A.

### *Participants*

Participants consisted of 148 undergraduate male intercollegiate athletes participating in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics national soccer tournament.

### *Procedure*

Each participant received a questionnaire containing one of the eight scenarios. Participants read the scenario and then rated the fairness of the distribution of the punishment and whether or not the punishment is likely to deter individuals from engaging in the same or similar misconduct in the future. The questionnaire took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

## Results

The design of this study was a 2 (Distribution) X 2 (Severity of punishment) X 2 (Severity of violation) fully crossed factorial design. Bivariate correlations were conducted between the four dependent variables. As seen in Table 1, all four dependent variables were significantly correlated with each other.

Table 1

*Dependent Variable Correlation Coefficients*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	1	2	3	4
1. Fairness to Player	3.60	1.35	131	1.00			
2. Fairness to Team	4.10	.96	131	.655	1.00		
3. Deter Player	2.79	1.37	131	.435	.507	1.00	
4. Deter Team	2.81	1.31	131	.335	.514	.809	1.00

*Note.* All correlations are significant at  $p < .01$ .

Therefore, a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted using the four dependent variables. The results indicated a significant Wilk's Lambda,  $F(4) = 561.55, p < .001, \eta^2 = .95$ . Follow-up 2 (Distribution) X 2 (Severity of punishment) X 2 (Severity of violation) Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) were conducted for each of the four dependent variables to further examine the significant MANOVA effects.

*Fairness to the Player.* In support of Hypothesis 1a, there was a significant main effect,  $F(1, 123) = 71.21, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .37$ , for Distribution, indicating that consistently distributing punishment ( $M = 4.32, SD = .75$ ) was perceived as more fair to the player than was conditional distribution of punishment ( $M = 2.73, SD = 1.4$ ). A significant main effect for severity of violation,  $F(1, 123) = 4.48, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$ ,

indicated that punishment was perceived as more fair to the punished player when the player had committed a severe violation ( $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ) than when the player had committed a moderately severe violation ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 1.42$ ). As seen in Table 2, no other effects were significant.

Table 2

*Analysis of Variance Summary Table for Fairness to Player*

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Eta</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>p</i>
Distribution of Punishment (DP)	1	71.21***	.367	.000
Severity of Punishment (SP)	1	.094	.001	.759
Severity of Violation (SV)	1	4.48*	.035	.036
DP x SP	1	.003	.000	.954
DP x SV	1	.007	.000	.932
SP x SV	1	.084	.001	.773
DP x SP x SV	1	.786	.006	.377
Error	123	(1.207)		

*Note.* Parenthesis denotes Mean Square for Error.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

*Fairness to Teammates.* In support of Hypothesis 1b, there was a significant main effect,  $F(1, 123) = 247.57$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $Eta^2 = .67$ , for Distribution, indicating that consistently distributing punishment ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = .96$ ) was perceived as more fair to

the teammates than was conditional distribution of punishment ( $M = 1.60$ ,  $SD = .81$ ). As seen in Table 3, no other effects were significant.

Table 3

*Analysis of Variance Summary Table for Fairness to Team*

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Eta</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>p</i>
Distribution of Punishment (DP)	1	247.57***	.668	.000
Severity of Punishment (SP)	1	.005	.000	.946
Severity of Violation (SV)	1	.744	.006	.390
DP x SP	1	1.05	.008	.307
DP x SV	1	.566	.005	.453
SP x SV	1	.090	.001	.765
DP x SP x SV	1	.937	.008	.335
Error	123	(.811)		

*Note.* Parenthesis denotes Mean Square for Error.

\*\*\* $p < .001$ .

*Deterrent to Future Misconduct by Punished Player.* There was a significant main effect,  $F(1, 123) = 45.25$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $Eta^2 = .27$ , for Distribution, indicating that consistently distributing punishment ( $M = 3.42$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ) was perceived as more likely to deter the punished player from future misconduct than was conditional distribution of punishment ( $M = 2.05$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ). There was a significant main effect for severity of punishment,  $F(1, 123) = 8.90$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $Eta^2 = .07$ , and a significant severity of violation

X severity of punishment interaction,  $F(1, 123) = 4.55, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$ . The interaction indicated that with a moderately severe rule violation, moderate ( $M = 2.93, SD = 1.36$ ) and severe ( $M = 3.03, SD = 1.42$ ) punishment were equally effective in deterring future misconduct. However, when the rule violation was severe, moderate punishment ( $M = 2.14, SD = 1.13$ ) was significantly less likely to deter future misconduct by the player than severe punishment ( $M = 3.19, SD = 1.38$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 2a was partially supported, suggesting that in the presence of a severe rule violation, severe punishment is perceived as a greater deterrent to future offenses by the punished teammate than moderate punishment. No other effects were significant.

Table 4

*Analysis of Variance Summary Table for Deterrence to Player*

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Eta</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>p</i>
Distribution of Punishment (DP)	1	45.25***	.269	.000
Severity of Punishment (SP)	1	8.90**	.067	.003
Severity of Violation (SV)	1	.690	.006	.408
DP x SP	1	.573	.005	.451
DP x SV	1	.202	.002	.654
SP x SV	1	4.55*	.036	.035
DP x SP x SV	1	.922	.007	.339
Error	123	(1.312)		

*Note.* Parenthesis denotes mean square for error.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

*Deterrent to Future Misconduct by Other Team Members.* There was a significant main effect,  $F(1, 123) = 42.2, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .26$ , for Distribution, indicating that consistently distributing punishment ( $M = 3.39, SD = 1.28$ ) was perceived as more likely to deter future misconduct of teammates than was conditional distribution of punishment ( $M = 2.12, SD = .96$ ). There was a significant main effect for severity of punishment,  $F(1, 123) = 5.09, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$ , and a significant severity of violation X severity of punishment interaction,  $F(1, 123) = 4.68, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$ . The interaction indicated that with a moderately severe rule violation (moderate  $M = 3.10, SD = 1.32$ ; severe  $M = 3.0, SD = 1.30$ ), moderate and severe punishment were equally effective in deterring future misconduct. However, when the rule violation was severe, moderate punishment ( $M = 2.19, SD = 1.15$ ) is significantly less likely to deter future misconduct by the player than severe punishment ( $M = 3.06, SD = 1.29$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 2b was partially supported, suggesting that in the presence of a severe rule violation, severe punishment is perceived as a greater deterrent than moderate punishment to future offenses by the other members of the team. As seen in Table 5, no other effects were significant.

Table 5

*Analysis of Variance Summary Table for Deterrence to Team*

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Eta</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>p</i>
Distribution of Punishment (DP)	1	42.20***	.255	.000
Severity of Punishment (SP)	1	5.09*	.040	.026
Severity of Violation (SV)	1	2.12	.017	.148
DP x SP	1	.044	.000	.833
DP x SV	1	.052	.000	.821
SP x SV	1	4.68*	.037	.033
DP x SP x SV	1	.3.41	.027	.067
Error	123	(1.209)		

*Note.* Parenthesis denotes Mean Square for Error.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .



## Discussion

Organizational justice research has focused on exploring the salience of perceptual justice or fairness in the workplace. In this experimental study, I examined the generalizability of distributive justice principles to a team sport setting by manipulating punishment severity and distribution to examine their effects on the distributive justice outcomes of punishment in an intercollegiate team sport. According to the distributive justice literature, an employee's evaluation of a punishment incident as just or unjust can elicit positive or negative reactions (Ball et al., 1992). Subsequently, employees who maintain beliefs of fair treatment will more likely maintain positive attitudes toward their supervisors, their work, and their outcomes (Moorman, 1991). In this study I attempted to determine similarities between justice perceptions in organizational and team sport settings.

Hypothesis 1a, which stated that consistent punishment will be perceived as more fair than conditional punishment to the punished team member, was supported. The participants perceived punishment to be most fair to the star player when the star player who committed the infraction received punishment consistent with the team rules. Thus, consistent punishment was perceived as more fair to the star player than preferential treatment of the star player. In addition, Hypothesis 1b, which stated that consistent punishment will be perceived as more fair than conditional punishment to the other members of the team, was supported. The athletes perceived the star player's punishment to be most fair to the rest of the team when the star player who committed the infraction received punishment consistent with the team rules. Thus, consistent punishment was perceived as more fair to the team members than preferential treatment of the star player.

Hypothesis 1 (1a, 1b) is based on the equity theory and an individual's social comparison of his/her outcomes to referent others. More specifically, the consistency rule implies that punishment outcomes applied consistently across individuals will be perceived as more fair than outcomes that are harsher or more lenient than others have received (Trevino, 1992). The premise that an individual receives just reward, regardless of status, is consistent with equity theory. In this study, scenarios were presented that distributed consistent punishment to all team members regardless of their ability to score points or contribute to winning games. The intercollegiate athletes in this study perceived consistent punishment across all team members, including the star player, as more fair than preferential treatment determined by players status. This outcome supports the importance of the principle of consistency when distributing punishment in intercollegiate sports teams.

Administering punishment consistently, as supported in this study, may be integral in influencing the effectiveness of punishment in team sport settings. Ball and Sims (1991) claimed that undesirable side effects, such as sadness or anger, are less likely to occur in situations where punishment is systematically administered. In fact, past research has indicated that employees dislike inconsistent punishment and become distrustful of those implementing it (Arvey et al., 1984). Therefore, the current and past research suggests that the consistent distribution of punishment compared to conditional or inconsistent distribution of punishment favorably affects perceptions of fairness. In this case, it was the perceptions of the sports team members. Distributive justice can influence performance in the workplace (Williams, 1999) and proper implementation of

punishment can enhance employee satisfaction (Ball & Sims, 1991). This principle may carry over to the sports team setting as well, improving player attitude and effort.

Hypothesis 2a, which stated that severe punishment will be perceived as a greater deterrent than moderate punishment to future offenses by the punished teammate, was partially supported. The results suggest that when a player commits a severe rule violation, severe punishment serves as a greater deterrent to future offenses than moderate punishment. However, when a player commits a moderately severe rule violation, moderate and severe punishment were perceived to be equally likely to deter future misconduct. Likewise, hypothesis 2b, which stated that severe punishment will be perceived as a greater deterrent than moderate punishment to future offenses by the other members of the team, was partially supported. The results suggest that a player severely punished for committing a severe rule violation was more likely to deter other team members from committing future infractions than a player who was moderately punished. However, when a player commits a moderately severe rule violation, moderate and severe punishment were perceived to be equally likely to deter future misconduct of the observing team members. These findings suggest that for punishment to be effective, the severity level must at least match the severity level of the infraction. This outcome is consistent with the findings of Ball et al. (1994) who discovered that for performance to improve as the result of punishment, subordinates must perceive the severity of the punishment as matching the severity of the infraction.

Hypothesis 2 (2a, 2b) proposed that more severe punishment would act as a greater deterrent to future offenses of the star player and other team members. The results suggested that, in some instances, moderate punishment may be just as effective.

In my literature review, I mentioned the heightened debate stemming from research disputing the appropriate level of punishment severity. For example, Greer and Labig (1987) found that greater disciplinary intensity correlated with greater reduction of misconduct, while Arvey and Ivancevich (1980) proposed that moderate levels of punishment intensity are more effective than high levels. This study's results suggest that consistently administering punishment, whose severity is in accordance with the severity of the infraction and not according to player status, achieved greater deterrence and resulted in higher perceived fairness. This outcome may suggest that the price of the punishment has to outweigh/match the value of the prohibited behavior to deter future misconduct. As long as there is more value to the misconduct than negative value associated with punishment, individuals may continue the prohibited behavior. Subsequently, equity theory may explain the higher perceptions of fairness. In the same way people expect levels of compensation proportional to their inputs, individuals may expect punishment proportional to their misconduct. The athletes in this study perceived the level of punishment severity as most fair when it coincided with the level of misconduct severity, regardless of team member status.

Assuming that severe punishment deters future misbehavior regardless of the severity of the rule violation, then why not simply severely punish every violation? A one word explanation provides the answer, injustice. Punishment is not free of side effects; disadvantages that accompany severe punishment may be common if it is not perceived as fair. Undesirable emotional and behavioral consequences may include sadness, anger, and embarrassment which may result in perceptions of injustice if the proceedings are not perceived as fair (Ball & Sims, 1991). This research, along with past

research, explains that severe punishment deters those punished and those observing (Greer & Labig, 1987). However, if less severe punishment has the same effect as severe punishment, then less severe punishment should be administered. By doing so, the threat of undesirable emotional and behavioral consequences is reduced (Ball & Sims, 1991).

There were a number of subsequent findings that were not hypothesized but are of interest. The athletes indicated that punishment was perceived to be more fair when the punished player had committed a severe violation than a moderate violation. It is possible that the athletes expect consequences for behavior that is severely out of line (e.g., failing a drug test), and expect less severe rule violations to be overlooked (e.g., unsportsmanlike conduct). This expectation does not suggest punishment should not be administered following moderately severe violations. However, it does suggest that athletes perceive severe punishment resulting from a severe violation in conduct as more fair. Why this perception is plausible may be due in part to what I eluded to earlier, individuals expect serious repercussions for serious error. In our society, cultural norms exist regarding the appropriate level of punishment for specific misconduct (Ball et al., 1992). This idea may generalize to intercollegiate athletes and severity of punishment.

In addition, the research yielded two findings indicating that consistently distributing punishment was perceived as more likely to deter the punished player, as well as other teammates, from future misconduct than was conditionally distributing punishment. This outcome, essentially, is the essence of effective punishment, as punishment should deter future unwanted behavior or misconduct. It is the primary purpose of implementing punishment in any organization. Punishment is intended to decrease the frequency of an unwanted response by presenting an aversive event

following that response. According to Arvey and Inancevich (1980), certain variables, if properly implemented, increase punishment's ability to modify behavior. This research suggests that consistent punishment across all team members increases punishment's ability to deter future misconduct in the punished player and the observing teammates.

These results further support the premise that the effects of punishment extend beyond merely those that are punished. Punishment may be thought of as a stone. When thrown into a pond, the stone propels ripples that eventually encompass the entire pond, even though the stone entered the pond at only one distinct location. Punishment is the stone thrown into the water of an organization, producing ripples that eventually extend throughout the entire social context affecting each member, even though it only entered the organization through one distinct individual. In this study, athletes perceived the effect observing punishment would have on unpunished team members. The athletes noted that observing consistent punishment to those punished would more likely deter their own future misbehavior. Furthermore, these results support Trevino's (1992) hypothesis that individual's observing the punishment of another co-worker reported less likelihood of engaging in similar behavior. Deterrence theory explains this phenomenon by suggesting that subsequent misconduct of observers of punishment is deterred primarily by increasing the perceived risks of the punished behavior (Trevino, 1992). In a sports team setting, perceived risks are formulated by observing the effects punishment has on other referent team members.

In all, punishment is a delicate phenomenon that has proven its value in our society even in its most rudimentary form. This research has aided in understanding appropriate methods in administering punishment to intercollegiate athletes. The

research provided further understanding concerning the effects consistency and severity have on fair perceptions of the outcome of punishment. Similarities have been drawn between athletic teams and business organizations regarding organizational justice theories, helping to support the foundation of distributive justice principles as they pertain to team sport organizations.

### *Implications*

The results of this study have extended the focus of distributive justice and punishment theories from the business setting to the athletic team setting. This study examined the impact punishment severity and consistency had on perceptions of punishment fairness and future deterrence of misbehavior. This research suggests that athletes perceive consistent punishment across all team members, including the star player, as most fair. It suggests that, although severe and moderate punishment are equally likely to deter future misconduct when rule violations are moderate, severe punishment is more likely to deter future misconduct when rule violations are severe. In addition, the research discovered that punishment, in general, is perceived as more fair when a player commits a severe violation than a moderately severe violation. Finally, the research implies that consistently distributing punishment across all team members, including the star player, will most likely deter future misconduct by all those involved with the team.

The use of intercollegiate athletes in this study allows generalization to many team sports played at the amateur level. Although soccer players were the only athletes used in this study, they likely share common attitudes with other athletic team members. The use of athletes from ten regions spanning the country from Washington (state) to

Florida, provide this research with generalizability that is not limited to one region of the country. Thus, there are a handful of practical implications that manifest from this research. Anecdotal evidence from my experience collecting data, suggests coaches and players are frequently faced with scenarios similar to those used in this study. This research provides them with guidelines regarding what is perceived as fair and what is perceived to be likely to deter future misconduct. Misconduct and rule violations may never cease to exist. However, awareness of proper methods of managing these situations may prove to be valuable to the entire athletic organization. When punishment is fairly implemented, sports teams may function more effectively and have more positive perceptions of team supervision.

#### *Concerns and Future Research*

There are at least three potential limitations of the present study that may hinder its generalizability, although marginally. First, the study's participants were all soccer players. While soccer is a fine example of a team sport, questioning other team sport participants may provide additional information regarding distributive justice and punishment theories. Second, the participants consisted solely of male athletes. While these results would certainly apply to other male team sport settings, results may vary for female athletes. Finally, some of the participants may not have fully understood the directions or they may have failed to comprehend the scenario situation. However, the manipulation check in this study addressed this potential problem and eliminated 17 out of the 148 participants. The eliminated participants were unable to answer straightforward questions regarding the brief scenario they had read.



## Conclusion

The present study focused on distributive justice outcomes of punishment in team settings. The results suggest the following: athletes perceive consistent distribution of punishment as more fair than conditionally distributing punishment; consistently distributing punishment is perceived to be more likely to deter future misconduct than conditional punishment; punishment, in general, is perceived as more fair when the violation committed is severe as opposed to moderately severe; severe punishment is perceived to deter future misconduct more often than moderately severe punishment when the violation committed is severe, and severe and moderate punishment are equally likely to deter future misconduct when the violation committed is moderately severe. These findings were consistent with organizational justice literature and punishment literature.

It is likely the phenomenon of punishment will never cease to exist because of its ability to provide consequential information concerning what is acceptable and what is not. Therefore, this educational tool warrants further research to fully understand its function in our society. The current research has successfully attempted to extend the realm of distributive justice outcomes of punishment to the athletic team setting. Thus, it has provided the reader with some sense of lucidity concerning distributive justice and punishment in team sports.

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# **Appendix A**

## **Data Collection Protocol**

**Western Kentucky University**  
**INFORMED CONSENT INFORMATION FORM**

I consent to serve as a subject in the research investigation entitled: Distributive Justice and Punishment in Team Sports. The nature and general purpose of the study have been explained to me by David Bucur, from the Psychology Department.

I understand the purpose of this research is to investigate perceptions of punishment in team settings and that the research procedures involve a hypothetical, yet realistic scenario to be read with several questions following the scenario.

There are no potential risks to participants in the project.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that all information is confidential and my identity will not be revealed; I am free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation in the project at any time; any questions I may have about the project will be answered by the researcher named below or by an authorized representative.

Western Kentucky University and the investigator named below have responsibility for ensuring that participants in research projects conducted under institutional auspices are safeguarded from injury or harm resulting from such participation. If appropriate, the person named below may be contacted for remedy or assistance for any possible consequences from such activities.

On the basis of the above statements, I agree to participate in this project.

---

Participant's signature

---

David R. Bucur (Researcher)  
Dr. Betsy Shoenfelt (Faculty Advisor)  
271 Tate Page Hall  
745-6390



## TEAM FAIRNESS STUDY

This research is studying perceptions of fairness in a team setting. Fairness is concerned with the just treatment of individuals in group settings. Fairness is important because people want to be treated fairly. The researchers are also interested in whether there are differences in opinions of different groups of individuals such as athletes versus non-athletes, males versus females, older versus younger individuals, etc. In order to answer these research questions, we need the demographic information requested on this part of the questionnaire.

Please do **NOT** put your name anywhere on this material.

1. **Athletic Team** (e.g., Western KY University Soccer)

\_\_\_\_\_

2. **Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_Male      \_\_\_\_\_Female

3. **Age:**      \_\_\_\_\_years

4. **Ethnicity:**

\_\_\_\_\_African American

\_\_\_\_\_Hispanic

\_\_\_\_\_White

\_\_\_\_\_Asian

\_\_\_\_\_Other \_\_\_\_\_

### DIRECTIONS:

On the following page is a hypothetical, but realistic scenario depicting a situation involving an intercollegiate basketball team. Please **carefully** read the scenario and answer the questions that follow it. When you have completed the questionnaire please wait until everyone else has finished. The researcher will then collect all of the questionnaires. **Again, please read the scenario and questions carefully.**

**Scenario:** Chris is an intercollegiate basketball player at State University. Chris is the star of the team and averages 23 points per game. During the last game Chris engaged in unsportsman-like conduct. The team rules state that the punishment for this type of team infraction is suspension from the next practice. Because the rules are applied equally to all team members, the coach suspended Chris from the following practice even though Chris is the star player.

Please answer the following 7 questions concerning the scenario described above. For the first 3 questions, please fill in the blanks based on the information in the scenario.

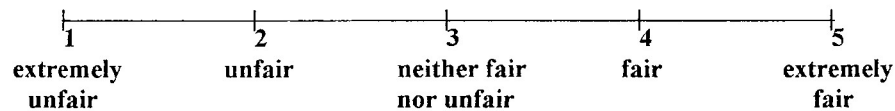
1.) In this situation **what rule was violated?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)

2.) In this situation **what punishment was implemented?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)

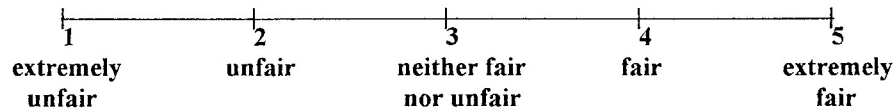
3.) Was the punishment in accordance with team rules? (circle one)    **Yes**                      **No**

**Punishment can be viewed from 2 perspectives; that is, from the perspective of the punished player and from the perspective of the other players on the team.**

4.) In terms of **fairness to the player who violated the rule**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

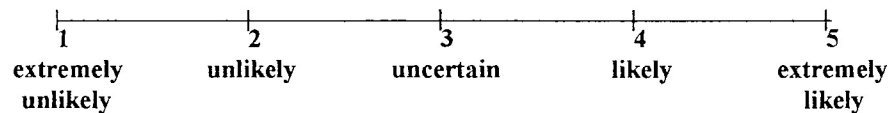


5.) In terms of **fairness to the rest of the team**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

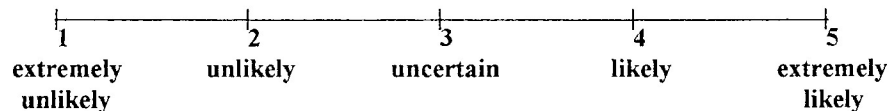


**In some cases, punishment will deter the misconduct; that is, punishment will make that behavior less likely to occur in the future in similar situations.**

6.) How likely is the discipline in this situation to **deter the player** who committed the rule violation from violating this rule in the future if they were still a member of an athletic team?



7.) How likely is the discipline in this situation to **deter the other players** from violating this rule in the future?



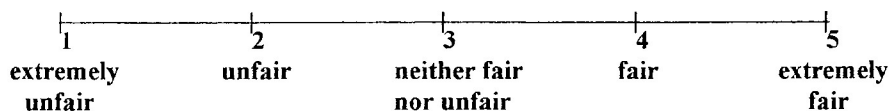
**Scenario:** Chris is an intercollegiate basketball player at State University. Chris is the star of the team and averages 23 points per game. During the last game Chris engaged in unsportsman-like conduct. The team rules state that the punishment for this type of team infraction is suspension from the next practice. Because Chris is the star of the team the coach decided to overlook the offense and did not suspend Chris from the following practice.

**Please answer the following 7 questions concerning the scenario described above. For the first 3 questions, please fill in the blanks based on the information in the scenario.**

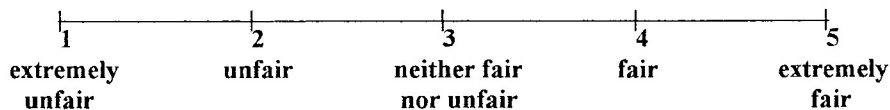
- 1.) In this situation **what rule was violated?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)
- 2.) In this situation **what punishment was implemented?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)
- 3.) Was the punishment in accordance with team rules? (circle one)    **Yes**                      **No**

**Punishment can be viewed from 2 perspectives; that is, from the perspective of the punished player and from the perspective of the other players on the team.**

- 4.) In terms of **fairness to the player who violated the rule**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

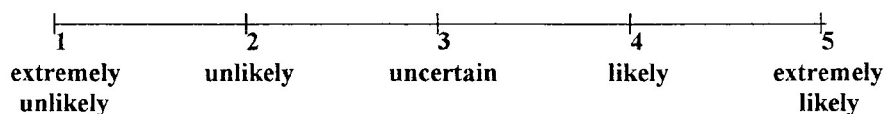


- 5.) In terms of **fairness to the rest of the team**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

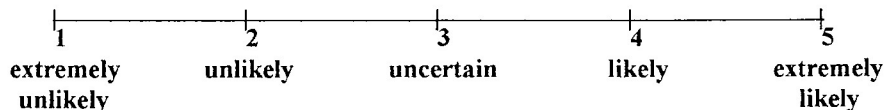


**In some cases, punishment will deter the misconduct; that is, punishment will make that behavior less likely to occur in the future in similar situations.**

- 6.) How likely is the discipline in this situation to **deter the player** who committed the rule violation from violating this rule in the future if they were still a member of an athletic team?



- 7.) How likely is the discipline in this situation to **deter the other players** from violating this rule in the future?





**Scenario:** Chris is an intercollegiate basketball player at State University. Chris is the star of the team and averages 23 points per game. During the last game Chris engaged in unsportsman-like conduct. The team rules state that the punishment for this type of team infraction is dismissal from the team. Because Chris is the star of the team the coach decided to overlook the offense and did not dismiss Chris from the team.

**Please answer the following 7 questions concerning the scenario described above. For the first 3 questions, please fill in the blanks based on the information in the scenario.**

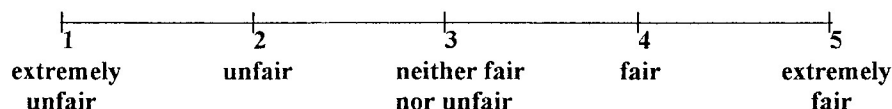
1.) In this situation **what rule was violated?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)

2.) In this situation **what punishment was implemented?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)

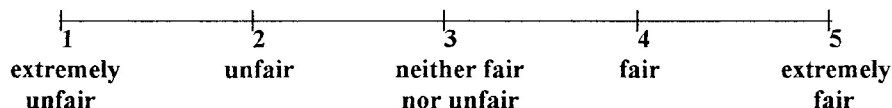
3.) Was the punishment in accordance with team rules? (circle one)    **Yes**                      **No**

**Punishment can be viewed from 2 perspectives; that is, from the perspective of the punished player and from the perspective of the other players on the team.**

4.) In terms of **fairness to the player who violated the rule**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

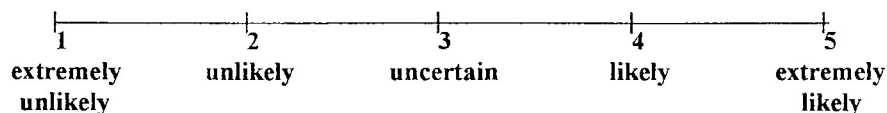


5.) In terms of **fairness to the rest of the team**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

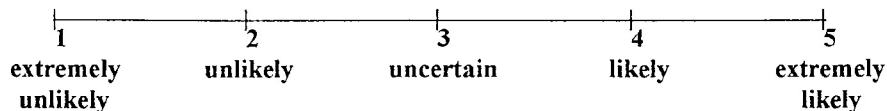


**In some cases, punishment will deter the misconduct; that is, punishment will make that behavior less likely to occur in the future in similar situations.**

6.) How likely is the discipline in this situation to **deter the player** who committed the rule violation from violating this rule in the future if they were still a member of an athletic team?



7.) How likely is the discipline in this situation to **deter the other players** from violating this rule in the future?



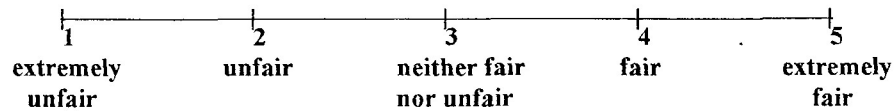
**Scenario:** Chris is an intercollegiate basketball player at State University. Chris is the star of the team and averages 23 points per game. Chris failed the most recent drug test administered to the team. The team rules state that the punishment for this type of team infraction is suspension from the next practice. Because the rules apply equally to all team members, the coach suspended Chris from the following practice even though Chris is the star player.

**Please answer the following 7 questions concerning the scenario described above. For the first 3 questions, please fill in the blanks based on the information in the scenario.**

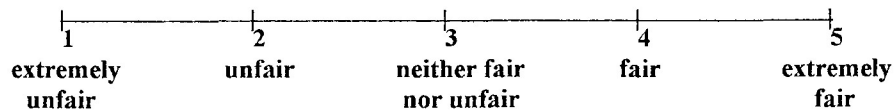
- 1.) In this situation **what rule was violated?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)
- 2.) In this situation **what punishment was implemented?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)
- 3.) Was the punishment in accordance with team rules? (circle one)    **Yes**                      **No**

**Punishment can be viewed from 2 perspectives; that is, from the perspective of the punished player and from the perspective of the other players on the team.**

- 4.) In terms of **fairness to the player who violated the rule**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

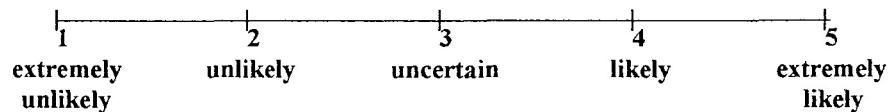


- 5.) In terms of **fairness to the rest of the team**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

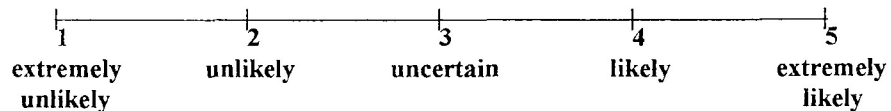


**In some cases, punishment will deter the misconduct; that is, punishment will make that behavior less likely to occur in the future in similar situations.**

- 6.) How likely is the discipline in this situation to **deter the player** who committed the rule violation from violating this rule in the future if they were still a member of an athletic team?



- 7.) How likely is the discipline in this situation to **deter the other players** from violating this rule in the future?



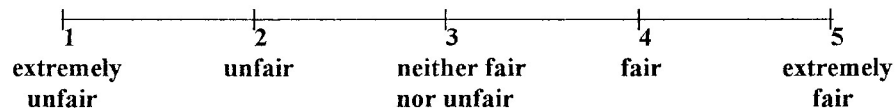
**Scenario:** Chris is an intercollegiate basketball player at State University. Chris is the star of the team and averages 23 points per game. Chris failed the most recent drug test administered to the team. The team rules state that the punishment for this type of team infraction is suspension from the next practice. Because Chris is the star of the team the coach decided to overlook the offense and did not suspend Chris from the following practice.

**Please answer the following 7 questions concerning the scenario described above. For the first 3 questions, please fill in the blanks based on the information in the scenario.**

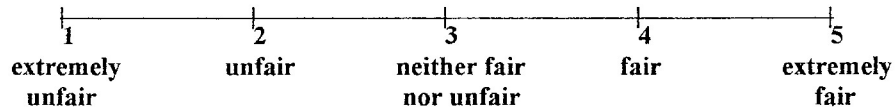
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- 2.) In this situation **what punishment was implemented?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)
- 3.) Was the punishment in accordance with team rules? (circle one)    **Yes**                      **No**

**Punishment can be viewed from 2 perspectives; that is, from the perspective of the punished player and from the perspective of the other players on the team.**

- 4.) In terms of **fairness to the player who violated the rule**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

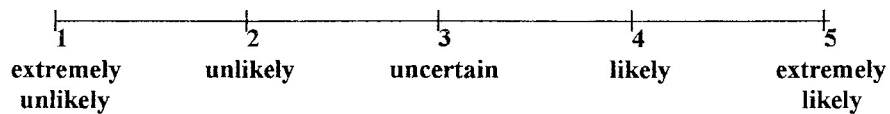


- 5.) In terms of **fairness to the rest of the team**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

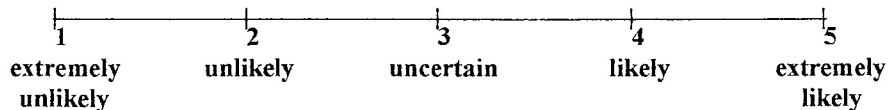


**In some cases, punishment will deter the misconduct; that is, punishment will make that behavior less likely to occur in the future in similar situations.**

- 6.) How likely is the discipline in this situation to **deter the player** who committed the rule violation from violating this rule in the future if they were still a member of an athletic team?



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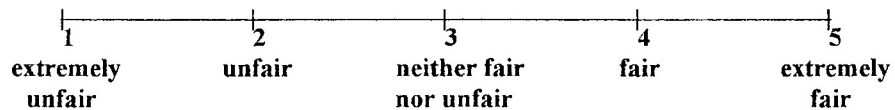
**Scenario:** Chris is an intercollegiate basketball player at State University. Chris is the star of the team and averages 23 points per game. Chris failed the most recent drug test administered to the team. The team rules state that the punishment for this type of team infraction is dismissal from the team. Because the rules apply equally to all team members, the coach dismissed Chris from the team even though Chris is the star player.

Please answer the following 7 questions concerning the scenario described above. For the first 3 questions, please fill in the blanks based on the information in the scenario.

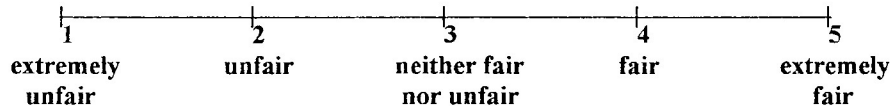
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- 2.) In this situation **what punishment was implemented?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)
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**Punishment can be viewed from 2 perspectives; that is, from the perspective of the punished player and from the perspective of the other players on the team.**

- 4.) In terms of **fairness to the player who violated the rule**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

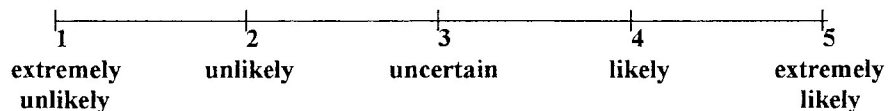


- 5.) In terms of **fairness to the rest of the team**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

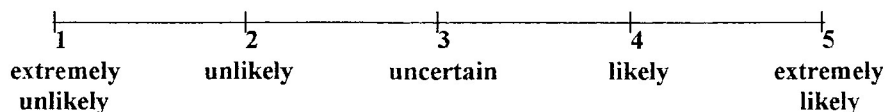


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**Please answer the following 7 questions concerning the scenario described above. For the first 3 questions, please fill in the blanks based on the information in the scenario.**

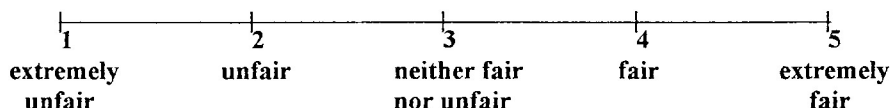
1.) In this situation **what rule was violated?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)

2.) In this situation **what punishment was implemented?** \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)

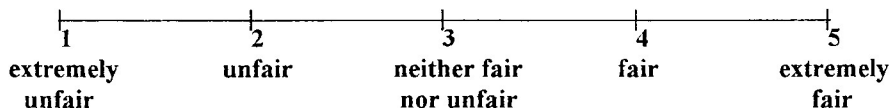
3.) Was the punishment in accordance with team rules? (circle one)    **Yes**                      **No**

**Punishment can be viewed from 2 perspectives; that is, from the perspective of the punished player and from the perspective of the other players on the team.**

4.) In terms of **fairness to the player who violated the rule**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

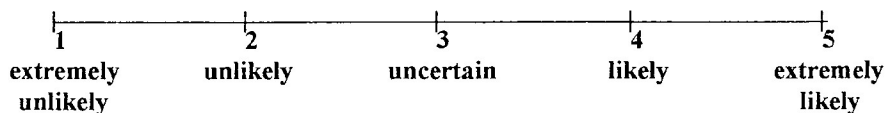


5.) In terms of **fairness to the rest of the team**, the way the coach handled this disciplinary situation was:

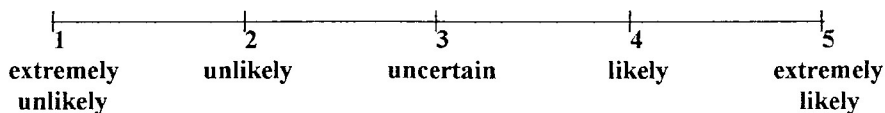


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7.) How likely is the discipline in this situation to **deter the other players** from violating this rule in the future?



## **Appendix B**

### Stimulus Centered Rating Study Data Collection Protocol

### Means and Standard Deviations For Stimulus Rating Study

Violations	<u>Students</u> (N = 39)		<u>Athletes</u> (N = 28)		<u>Coaches</u> (N = 8)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Late to Practice	2.49	.82	2.71	1.05	3.50	.53
Late to Team Workout	2.72	.97	3.04	1.00	3.50	.53
Use of Profanity	2.85	.78	2.18	1.19	3.13	.99
Breaking Curfew before a game	3.08	.96	2.86	1.15	4.25	.89
Skipping Team Study Hall	3.10	.99	2.71	1.08	3.87	.83
Disrespectful to Dorm Supervisor	3.28	1.19	2.68	1.09	3.50	.53
Late to Team Bus	3.31	1.00	2.89	1.31	3.88	.99
Skipping Team Workout	3.49	.76	3.79	1.23	4.50	.53
Missing Practice	3.54	.76	3.89	1.13	4.50	.76
Disrespectful to Professor	3.77	1.09	2.93	1.02	4.00	.53
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	3.87	.80	3.21	1.10	4.00	.53
Talking Back to Coach	3.90	.91	*3.56	*1.15	4.38	.74
Missing Team Bus	3.97	.96	3.57	1.35	4.50	.76
Fighting With Teammate	4.05	.65	3.39	1.07	4.00	1.07
Charged with a Misdemeanor	4.56	.64	4.32	.98	4.62	.74
Charged with a Felony	4.74	.55	4.57	.96	5.00	.00
Failing a Drug Test	4.77	.74	4.46	1.07	5.00	.00

**Note:** Scale Values (Violations)

1 = Not Severe, 2 = Moderately Severe, 3 = Severe, 4 = Very Severe, 5 = Extremely Severe

\* n = 27

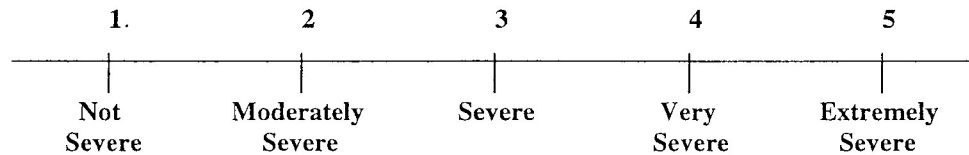
Punishments	<u>Students</u> (N = 39)		<u>Athletes</u> (N = 28)		<u>Coaches</u> (N = 8)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Extra Study Hall	1.67	.81	1.57	.57	2.00	.93
Clean Locker Room	2.08	.90	1.61	.57	1.75	.89
Run Laps or Stadium Stairs	2.10	.82	2.46	.92	2.38	.74
Verbal Reprimand	2.31	1.17	2.00	1.25	1.63	.92
6 am Workout	2.44	1.02	2.36	.99	2.63	.74
Additional Conditioning	2.44	.94	2.68	1.19	2.38	.74
No Team Gear	2.87	1.22	2.68	1.19	2.88	1.13
Suspension from Practice	2.97	1.22	3.36	1.06	2.88	1.25
Revoke Starting Position	3.46	1.00	2.86	1.15	3.13	.64
Suspension from Game	3.72	1.07	3.93	1.18	4.13	.35
Dismissed from the Team	4.77	.48	4.71	.85	5.00	.00

**Note:** Scale Values (Punishments)

1 = Not Severe, 2 = Moderately Severe, 3 = Severe, 4 = Very Severe, 5 = Extremely Severe

### Discipline in Athletic Teams Questionnaire

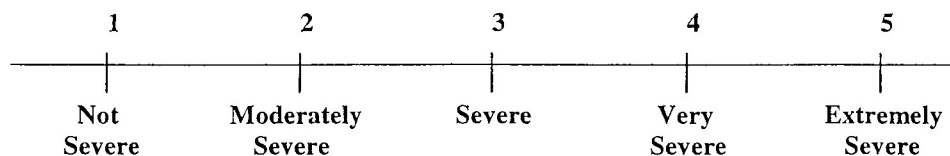
Most athletic teams have rules that guide the athlete's behavior outside of the game situation and which athletes are expected to follow. Below you will find listed in random order a number of team rule violations (i.e., infractions) that athletes might commit. Please evaluate each infraction in the context of a NCAA Division I Intercollegiate Athletic Team. Think in terms of the implications of the infraction for the individual athlete and the team as a whole. Please use the following rating scale and circle the rating for each infraction that reflects your opinion of the severity of that infraction.



**Circle the Number that Reflects  
Your Rating of Each Infraction**

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Late to practice.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Skipping a scheduled team workout.                                  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Failing a drug test.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Disrespectful to instructor in class.                               |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Use of profanity in front of coaching staff.                        |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Charged with a felony crime.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Skipping scheduled team study hall.                                 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Late to the team bus to/from game, holding up the team.             |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Breaking curfew the night before a game.                            |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Fighting with a teammate.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Talking back to a coach during practice.                            |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Missing the team bus to/from game, holding up the team.             |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Unsportsmanlike conduct.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Charged with a misdemeanor crime (e.g. shoplifting)                 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Disrespectful to supervisor in dormitory.                           |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Late to a scheduled team workout.                                   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Missing practice for reason other than emergency or medical reason. |

Most athletic teams have “punishments” that are administered to athletes that violate team rules. Below you will find listed in random order a number of disciplinary actions (i.e., punishments). Please evaluate each punishment in the context of a NCAA Division I Intercollegiate Athletic Team. Think in terms of the implications of the punishment for the individual athlete and the team as a whole. Please use the following rating scale and circle the rating for each punishment that reflects your opinion of the severity of that punishment.



**Circle the Number that Reflects  
Your Rating of Each Punishment**

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Suspension from the next game.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6 am workout.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Extra Study Hall.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Dismissed from the team.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Suspension from practice.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Stay after game and help managers clean locker room, etc.                         |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Not given team gear (e.g., shoes, sweats suits, etc.); required to wear own gear. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Additional conditioning.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Revoke starting position for next game; required to re-earn starting position.    |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Verbal reprimand.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Run laps or stadium stairs after practice.  |
- 

The researchers are interested in whether or not there are differences in opinions of different groups such as athletes versus non-athletes, males versus females, older versus younger individuals, etc. In order to answer these research questions, we need the demographic information requested below.

**1. Athletic Experience:** (check all that apply)

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rec League (e.g., YMCA, church, city, etc.) | Sport(s)_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intramurals                                 | Sport(s)_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School Varsity                         | Sport(s)_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NCAA Intercollegiate                        | Sport(s)_____ |

**2. Gender:**    ☐ Male                      ☐ Female

**3. Age:**         Years

**4. Ethnicity:**    ☐ African American                      ☐ Asian  
                          ☐ White                                      ☐ Hispanic  
                          ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time and thoughtfulness in completing this questionnaire!